

Meeting of the Historical Architectural Review Board  
March 15, 2007

The Falls Church Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB) convened its monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 15, 2007. Present were Chair Charles Moore, Vice Chair Linda Valentino, and Secretary Cynthia Kuhn, along with staff liaison Debra Gee.

The HARB then elected its officers for the year: Chair Charles Moore, Vice Chair Linda Valentino, and Secretary Cynthia Kuhn.

The HARB then took up items 4A and 4B: Ordinance T07-05, to Amend the Official Zoning District Map of the City of Falls Church, Virginia, by Rezoning Approximately 1.53 Acres of Land from B-3, General Business District (.42 Acres), and T-1, Transitional District (1.11 Acres), to B-1, Limited Business District for the Properties Located at 436, 458, and 472 North Washington Street to Hekemian & Company, Inc.; and Resolution TR7-07. A Resolution to Grant a Special Exception for Mixed Use for Properties Located at 436, 458, and 472 North Washington Street to Hekemian & Company, Inc. Recommendations to the City Council.

Following a review and discussion of the Hekemian proposal the HARB made the following comments and recommendations and asked Ms. Gee to forward them to Council for its consideration:

- The Architectural Review Board (ARB), predecessor to the HARB, granted a demolition permit for the structure located at 472 North Washington Street on 30 October 1989. The City Attorney ruled previously that there is no expiration date on a demolition permit granted by the ARB. Therefore, there is no impediment to razing the structure.
- The City's Historic and Cultural Conservation (HCC) Ordinance, Section 38-39 of the City Code, allows the City Council to designate structures and *sites* (emphasis added) if the structure or site meets one or more of the following criteria:
  - It exemplifies or reflects important aspects of the cultural, political, economical, social or military history of the nation, state, region or the City of Falls Church.
  - It is associated with persons or events of national, state or regional significance.
  - It is a good example of local or regional architectural design, making it valuable for the study of a period, style or method of construction which no longer is in general use.

- It contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation in architecture, construction or technology.
- Evidence exists that President Taft spoke from the front porch of 472 North Washington Street as he was enroute from Washington, DC to Manassas, VA to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Bull Run. The HARB recommends that the applicant provide a suitable marker within the development to mark this event.
- The structure at 436 North Washington Street is a bungalow built in 1931 and is representative of the 'next generation' of historic properties that the HARB has recommended for certification and protection. Bungalow style structures are being lost or remodeled extensively throughout the City and it is regrettable that this property will be lost.
- The HARB also noted that the development proposed at this location is very dense, making it incompatible with the adjacent historic properties containing residential and ancillary structures on large open lots. The HARB has previously recommended that the council amend the HCC Ordinance to include the impact of new construction on adjacent protected properties. This current circumstance provides another example of our lack of control in limiting the negative impact of development adjacent to protected structures.

The HARB then reviewed its draft annual report for 2006. Ms. Kuhn moved and Ms. Valentino seconded its adoption and transmittal to the Council. The motion was approved unanimously.

The HARB then reviewed its rules of procedure and agreed to revise the second sentence of item 5 to read as follows (change noted with strike through and underline):

5. Applications: No designated Structure shall be razed, moved or altered without first obtaining a permit from the building inspector, which shall be issued only after the approval of the same by the HARB. No building permit will be issued until the HARB has ~~voted on~~ considered the application.

Under Item 6, Other Items, Ms. Gee reported that she had shared information about the HCC Ordinance with a realtor who had made inquiries about a protected structure on Grove Avenue and that the owner of the protected structure at 539 Great Falls Street has inquired about removing an accessory structure on the property to facilitate infill development.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia G. Kuhn, Secretary